



[4910-13-P]

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

Federal Aviation Administration

14 CFR Part 39

[Docket No. FAA-2012-0330; Directorate Identifier 2011-NM-116-AD]

RIN 2120-AA64

Airworthiness Directives; Saab AB, Saab Aerosystems Airplanes

AGENCY: Federal Aviation Administration (FAA), DOT.

ACTION: Notice of proposed rulemaking (NPRM).

SUMMARY: We propose to adopt a new airworthiness directive (AD) for all Saab AB, Saab Aerosystems Model 340A (SAAB/SF340A) and SAAB 340B Airplanes. This proposed AD was prompted by reports indicating that wear of the elevator pushrods have occurred on some airplanes after extended time in service. This proposed AD would require determining if a certain part number is installed, performing a detailed inspection for individual play between the elevator pushrod assembly and degradation of elevator pushrod assembly, and replacing the affected elevator pushrod assembly with a new elevator pushrod assembly if necessary. We are proposing this AD to prevent a free elevator from affecting the pitch control authority, which may result in reduced controllability of the airplane.

DATES: We must receive comments on this proposed AD by [INSERT DATE 45 DAYS AFTER DATE OF PUBLICATION IN THE FEDERAL REGISTER].

ADDRESSES: You may send comments by any of the following methods:

- Federal eRulemaking Portal: Go to <http://www.regulations.gov>. Follow the

instructions for submitting comments.

- Fax: (202) 493-2251.

- Mail: U.S. Department of Transportation, Docket Operations, M-30, West Building Ground Floor, Room W12-140, 1200 New Jersey Avenue SE., Washington, DC 20590.

- Hand Delivery: U.S. Department of Transportation, Docket Operations, M-30, West Building Ground Floor, Room W12-140, 1200 New Jersey Avenue SE., Washington, DC, between 9 a.m. and 5 p.m., Monday through Friday, except Federal holidays.

For service information identified in this proposed AD, contact Saab AB, Saab Aerosystems, SE-581 88, Linköping, Sweden; telephone +46 13 18 5591; fax +46 13 18 4874; e-mail saab2000.techsupport@saabgroup.com; Internet <http://www.saabgroup.com>. You may review copies of the referenced service information at the FAA, Transport Airplane Directorate, 1601 Lind Avenue SW., Renton, Washington. For information on the availability of this material at the FAA, call 425-227-1221.

Examining the AD Docket

You may examine the AD docket on the Internet at <http://www.regulations.gov>; or in person at the Docket Operations office between 9 a.m. and 5 p.m., Monday through Friday, except Federal holidays. The AD docket contains this proposed AD, the regulatory evaluation, any comments received, and other information. The street address for the Docket Operations office (telephone (800) 647-5527) is in the ADDRESSES

section. Comments will be available in the AD docket shortly after receipt.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Shahram Daneshmandi, Aerospace Engineer, International Branch, ANM-116, Transport Airplane Directorate, FAA, 1601 Lind Avenue SW., Renton, Washington 98057-3356; telephone (425) 227-1112; fax (425) 227-1149.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Comments Invited

We invite you to send any written relevant data, views, or arguments about this proposed AD. Send your comments to an address listed under the ADDRESSES section. Include “Docket No. FAA-2012-0330; Directorate Identifier 2011-NM-116-AD” at the beginning of your comments. We specifically invite comments on the overall regulatory, economic, environmental, and energy aspects of this proposed AD. We will consider all comments received by the closing date and may amend this proposed AD based on those comments.

We will post all comments we receive, without change, to <http://www.regulations.gov>, including any personal information you provide. We will also post a report summarizing each substantive verbal contact we receive about this proposed AD.

Discussion

The European Aviation Safety Agency (EASA), which is the Technical Agent for the Member States of the European Community, has issued EASA Airworthiness Directive 2011-0078, dated May 5, 2011 (referred to after this as “the MCAI”), to correct

an unsafe condition for the specified products. The MCAI states:

Field experience has indicated that wear of the elevator pushrod has occurred on some aeroplanes after extended time in service. Although properly installed, the locknut has been able to back off within a limited range, leading to degradation of the pushrod which causes backlash in between the rod end threads.

This condition, if not detected and corrected, may lead to a free elevator affecting the pitch control authority, possibly resulting in reduced control of the aeroplane.

To address this unsafe condition, SAAB AB Aeronautics have issued Service Bulletin (SB) 340-27-100, accomplishment of which will reduce the probability for backlash and minimize the possibility of failure in the pitch control system.

For the reasons described above, this [EASA] AD requires the identification of the pushrod assembly Part Number (P/N) as installed on the aeroplane, replacement of P/N TDF11755 pushrod assemblies, inspection of P/N 12003-33 and P/N R20990 elevator pushrod assemblies [for individual play between the elevator pushrod assembly and degradation of elevator pushrod assembly] and corrective actions [replacement], depending on findings.

You may obtain further information by examining the MCAI in the AD docket.

Relevant Service Information

Saab AB, Saab Aerosystems has issued Saab Service Bulletin 340-27-100, dated February 1, 2011. The actions described in this service information are intended to correct the unsafe condition identified in the MCAI.

FAA's Determination and Requirements of This Proposed AD

This product has been approved by the aviation authority of another country, and is approved for operation in the United States. Pursuant to our bilateral agreement with

the State of Design Authority, we have been notified of the unsafe condition described in the MCAI and service information referenced above. We are proposing this AD because we evaluated all pertinent information and determined an unsafe condition exists and is likely to exist or develop on other products of the same type design.

Costs of Compliance

Based on the service information, we estimate that this proposed AD would affect about 162 products of U.S. registry. We also estimate that it would take about 1 work-hours per product to comply with the basic requirements of this proposed AD. The average labor rate is \$85 per work-hour. Based on these figures, we estimate the cost of the proposed AD on U.S. operators to be \$13,770, or \$85 per product.

In addition, we estimate that any necessary follow-on actions would take about 7 work-hours and require parts costing \$1,588 for a cost of \$2,183 per product. We have no way of determining the number of products that may need these actions.

Authority for This Rulemaking

Title 49 of the United States Code specifies the FAA's authority to issue rules on aviation safety. Subtitle I, section 106, describes the authority of the FAA Administrator. "Subtitle VII: Aviation Programs," describes in more detail the scope of the Agency's authority.

We are issuing this rulemaking under the authority described in "Subtitle VII, Part A, Subpart III, Section 44701: General requirements." Under that section, Congress charges the FAA with promoting safe flight of civil aircraft in air commerce by prescribing regulations for practices, methods, and procedures the Administrator finds

necessary for safety in air commerce. This regulation is within the scope of that authority because it addresses an unsafe condition that is likely to exist or develop on products identified in this rulemaking action.

Regulatory Findings

We determined that this proposed AD would not have federalism implications under Executive Order 13132. This proposed AD would not have a substantial direct effect on the States, on the relationship between the national Government and the States, or on the distribution of power and responsibilities among the various levels of government.

For the reasons discussed above, I certify this proposed regulation:

1. Is not a “significant regulatory action” under Executive Order 12866;
2. Is not a “significant rule” under the DOT Regulatory Policies and Procedures (44 FR 11034, February 26, 1979);
3. Will not affect intrastate aviation in Alaska; and
4. Will not have a significant economic impact, positive or negative, on a substantial number of small entities under the criteria of the Regulatory Flexibility Act.

We prepared a regulatory evaluation of the estimated costs to comply with this proposed AD and placed it in the AD docket.

List of Subjects in 14 CFR Part 39

Air transportation, Aircraft, Aviation safety, Incorporation by reference, Safety.

The Proposed Amendment

Accordingly, under the authority delegated to me by the Administrator, the FAA

proposes to amend 14 CFR part 39 as follows:

PART 39 - AIRWORTHINESS DIRECTIVES

1. The authority citation for part 39 continues to read as follows:

Authority: 49 U.S.C. 106(g), 40113, 44701.

§ 39.13 [Amended]

2. The FAA amends § 39.13 by adding the following new AD:

Saab AB, Saab Aerosystems: Docket No. FAA-2012-0330; Directorate Identifier 2011-NM-116-AD.

(a) Comments Due Date

We must receive comments by [INSERT DATE 45 DAYS AFTER DATE OF PUBLICATION IN THE FEDERAL REGISTER].

(b) Affected ADs

None.

(c) Applicability

This AD applies to Saab AB, Saab Aerosystems Model 340A (SAAB/SF340A) and SAAB 340B airplanes, certificated in any category, all serial numbers.

(d) Subject

Air Transport Association (ATA) of America Code 27: Flight Controls.

(e) Reason

This AD was prompted by reports indicating that wear of the elevator pushrods have occurred on some airplanes after extended time in service. We are issuing this AD to prevent a free elevator from affecting the pitch control authority, which may result in

reduced controllability of the airplane.

(f) Compliance

You are responsible for having the actions required by this AD performed within the compliance times specified, unless the actions have already been done.

(g) Inspection to Determine the Part Number

Within the applicable time specified in table 1 of this AD, inspect each elevator pushrod assembly to determine the part number (P/N).

(1) If a P/N TDF11755 elevator pushrod assembly is installed, or if the part number cannot be determined: Before further flight, replace the affected elevator pushrod assembly with a P/N R20990 elevator pushrod assembly, in accordance with the Accomplishment Instructions of Saab Service Bulletin 340-27-100, dated February 1, 2011.

(2) If P/N 12003-33 or P/N R20990 elevator pushrod assembly is installed: Do a detailed inspection for individual play between the rod end and the pushrod at the locking device and degradation of elevator pushrod assembly (including rod end threads not visible through the inspection hole in the pushrod, and the nut and locking device not properly locked with the lock wire), in accordance with the Accomplishment Instructions of Saab Service Bulletin 340-27-100, dated February 1, 2011.

Table 1 – Compliance time

Total Flight Hours Accumulated as of the Effective Date of This AD	Compliance Time
For airplanes with 30,000 total flight hours or more	Within 6 months after the effective date of this AD
For airplanes with 28,000 total flight hours or more, but less than 30,000 total flight hours	Before the accumulation of 30,000 total flight hours or within 6 months after the effective date of this AD, whichever occurs later
For airplanes with less than 28,000 total flight hours	Before the accumulation of 30,000 total flight hours

(h) Corrective Action

If, during the inspection of elevator pushrod assembly required by paragraph (g)(2) of this AD, individual play between the rod end and the pushrod at the locking device, or degradation of the elevator pushrod assembly (including rod end threads not visible through the inspection hole in the pushrod, and the nut and locking device not properly locked with the lock wire) is found: Before further flight, replace the affected elevator pushrod assembly with a new elevator pushrod assembly, P/N R20990, in accordance with the Accomplishment Instructions of Saab Service Bulletin 340-27-100, dated February 1, 2011.

(i) Parts Installation

As of the effective date of this AD, no person may install an elevator pushrod assembly with P/N TDF11755, on any airplane.

(j) Reporting Requirement

Submit a report of the findings (both positive and negative) of the inspection and replacement required by paragraphs (g) and (h) of this AD to Saab AB, Support and

Services, SE-581 88 Linköping, Sweden; fax +46 13 18 48 74; e-mail

saab340.techsupport@saabgroup.com; at the applicable time specified in paragraph (j)(1)

or (j)(2) of this AD.

(1) If the inspection was done on or after the effective date of this AD: Submit the report within 30 days after the inspection.

(2) If the inspection was done before the effective date of this AD: Submit the report within 30 days after the effective date of this AD.

(k) Other FAA AD Provisions

The following provisions also apply to this AD:

(1) Alternative Methods of Compliance (AMOCs): The Manager, International Branch, ANM-116, FAA, has the authority to approve AMOCs for this AD, if requested using the procedures found in 14 CFR 39.19. In accordance with 14 CFR 39.19, send your request to your principal inspector or local Flight Standards District Office, as appropriate. If sending information directly to the International Branch, send it to ATTN: Shahram Daneshmandi, Aerospace Engineer, International Branch, ANM-116, Transport Airplane Directorate, FAA, 1601 Lind Avenue SW., Renton, Washington 98057-3356; telephone (425) 227-1112; fax (425) 227-1149. Information may be e-mailed to: 9-ANM-116-AMOC-REQUESTS@faa.gov. Before using any approved AMOC, notify your appropriate principal inspector, or lacking a principal inspector, the manager of the local flight standards district office/certificate holding district office. The AMOC approval letter must specifically reference this AD.

(2) Airworthy Product: For any requirement in this AD to obtain corrective

actions from a manufacturer or other source, use these actions if they are FAA-approved. Corrective actions are considered FAA-approved if they are approved by the State of Design Authority (or their delegated agent). You are required to assure the product is airworthy before it is returned to service.

(3) Reporting Requirements: A federal agency may not conduct or sponsor, and a person is not required to respond to, nor shall a person be subject to a penalty for failure to comply with a collection of information subject to the requirements of the Paperwork Reduction Act unless that collection of information displays a current valid OMB Control Number. The OMB Control Number for this information collection is 2120-0056. Public reporting for this collection of information is estimated to be approximately 5 minutes per response, including the time for reviewing instructions, completing and reviewing the collection of information. All responses to this collection of information are mandatory. Comments concerning the accuracy of this burden and suggestions for reducing the burden should be directed to the FAA at: 800 Independence Ave. SW, Washington, DC 20591, Attn: Information Collection Clearance Officer, AES-200.

(l) Related Information

Refer to MCAI EASA Airworthiness Directive 2011-0078, dated May 5, 2011; and Saab Service Bulletin 340-27-100, dated February 1, 2011; for related information. Issued in Renton, Washington, on March 23, 2012.

Ali Bahrami,
Manager,
Transport Airplane Directorate,
Aircraft Certification Service.

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